

COUNTY SALARY RECOMMENDATION PANEL

DATE: June 28, 2007

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:23 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:20 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Council Clerk, Jean Milharcic, Acting Chair
James Glynn
Lettie Oliver

Absent Members

Betty Wilson

AGENDA

Discussion on last year's recommendations

Discussion on salary formula change – Township Assessors Becky Williams (Franklin Twp) and Joline Ohmart (Washington Twp).

COUNTY SALARY RECOMMENDATION PANEL

The County Salary Recommendation Panel of the City-County Council met on Thursday, June 28, 2007. Acting Chair Jean Milharcic called the meeting to order at 5:23 p.m., with the following members present: Lettie Oliver and James Glynn. Also in attendance was Aaron Haith, General Counsel. Absent was Betty Wilson.

Council Clerk swore in the panel members. She then informed the panel that they need to nominate a panel chair, as Betty Wilson is no longer able to continue in this position.

Mr. Glynn nominated Ms. Oliver to the position of Chair of the panel, and she accepted the nomination. The motion carried by a vote of 2-0.

Council Clerk said that included in the panel's packets are benefit comparisons from cities in Indiana and some Midwest cities, along with the recommendation of the panel last year (found in June 26, 2006 Salary Panel minutes). Council Clerk went on to explain that the recommendations from last year's panel did not get implemented during the budget process due to some errors. She said the 2006 elected officials' salary is also the same for this year with no pay increase.

Chair Oliver asked if no action on the recommendation was due to late submission. Council Clerk said there was some confusion when the budget was written. The money was included, but the text (resolution) was not changed to pay the increases.

Chair Oliver asked what the panel's recommendation for percentage pay increase was last year. Mr. Haith said the Controller will be making a recommendation as to the range that the Office of Finance and Management would like the panel to consider. Council Clerk directed the panel to page four of the June 26, 2006 minutes (Exhibit A, attached), where it was suggested the 2007 ranges would not exceed a 4% increase of passage of the budget.

Bob Clifford, City Controller, said he accepts responsibility for some of the county officials not receiving a raise last year. He said they want to make sure this year they receive a recommendation from the panel and implement it this year. He added that this will be a very difficult budget year no matter what transpires with the County Option Income Tax (COIT), and they request that the salary recommendation stay in range with all the other elected officials and appointed county department heads.

Mr. Glynn asked if the Controller has any information on revenues from last year or this year. Mr. Clifford said the revenues are determined by the Council with respect to which tax rate they set in a typical year based on property taxes. He said in 2007, if the Council chooses to adopt the new local option income taxes, the revenues for most departments will increase to the three or four percent range.

Chair Oliver asked if the revenue increase will affect the complete budget. Mr. Clifford replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Glynn asked if there is any updated information on the salary grades. Mr. Clifford said he can provide that information to the panel. He said all city and county salaries were re-graded to provide parity between city and county employees. All minimum salaries were upgraded to minimum pay grades, and then all salaries and ranges were increased by three percent (3%) last year. He said there is a minimum and maximum to every pay grade.

Chair Oliver asked if the three percent (3%) increase was for employees only and not elected officials. Mr. Clifford replied in the affirmative. Chair Oliver asked that the updated information for the salary pay grades be given to the panel. Mr. Haith said they will get the information from the Department of Administration (DOA).

Ms. Milharcic asked if the city and county have two separate grades. Mr. Clifford said all the grades are the same; however, there are two different pay amounts, depending on the hours worked (40 hours or 37.50 hours).

Discussion on salary formula change – Township Assessors Becky Williams (Franklin Twp) and Joline Ohmart (Washington Twp).

Ms. Williams distributed the Marion County Township Assessors Salary Review and Comparison handout (Exhibit A, attached) and said they are requesting a change in the ordinance on how the assessors are paid based on years of service, education, and certification. She said currently assessors' salaries are based on parcel count, and there is an increased amount of newly elected assessors who have no experience or certification, yet make more money than assessors who have been in service for years with certification. Ms. Williams directed the panel to Exhibit A, where they drafted a pay structure for assessors, beginning with newly elected to years of service. The requested starting pay is at a level so that no assessor would receive a pay cut. She added that their requested salary range is well within the salary amounts city department heads are currently making. Ms. Williams relayed amounts of assessors' pay in other states (found in Exhibit A), where salaries range from mid \$80,000 to mid \$90,000. She said it is time that Marion County Assessors' salaries are brought up to reflect other state assessors' salaries and city department heads.

Chair Oliver asked if they are suggesting bringing all assessors to \$65,000, not including deferred compensation, as some are currently making \$55,000. Ms. Williams replied in the affirmative and said the salaries would increase from \$65,000 based on year of service and certification. Chair Oliver said bringing assessors to \$65,000 would give salary increases between \$5,000 and \$10,000, with the exception of the Center Township assessor who is already at \$65,000. Chair Oliver asked if there is information on each assessor's skill level or certification. Ms. Williams said she was trying to obtain that information before the meeting, but the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) could not give her current information at the time. She said the skill level information will show which assessors have Level I or II certification.

Ms. Ohmart said the problem with the current salary structure is that it is based on parcel count, and certain townships have more parcels than others, giving them the higher salaries. She said in some cases the Assessors with the small parcel count have smaller staffs and work just as hard as those with bigger parcel counts.

Mr. Glynn asked if the panel could receive the parcel count for each township. Ms. Williams said she will provide the panel with that information. Mr. Glynn asked if they are requesting a \$65,000 salary for a newly elected assessor after they serve one year. Ms. Williams replied in the negative and said any newly elected assessor's starting salary would be \$65,000. Once an assessor has served a full term (four years) with a Level I certification, they would move to \$68,000 and would move up further according to their requested pay structure.

Chair Oliver asked if the assessors would receive the three percent raises as given to other staff in addition to their term raises.. Ms. Williams said the intention is that if three percent is given to other employees, then the requested pay figures would also increase by three percent.

Mr. Glynn asked if a calculation has been done for the total cost of this increase. Ms. Williams said she has not done a calculation. Council Clerk said she will have the Council's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) calculate the total increase. Mr. Glynn asked if anything else would be added to the assessors' compensation. Ms. Williams said the eight percent deferred compensation would be added.

Chair Oliver asked when the salary ranges are implemented and staff is at the maximum of their range, if they automatically receive the three percent raise. Mr. Clifford said with the salary ranges, they do not automatically receive the three percent increase. He said, for example, the City-County Councillors and the Mayor have not had a raise for eight or nine years, and the increase last year was only given to non-bargaining employees, which do not include elected officials. Chair Oliver asked if an increase is done every year. Council Clerk said once the increase is passed, it remains until a new recommendation is made that is different.

Mr. Haith said the state statute does not say that the assessor has to have a certain level of education or certification to hold the office. He said the panel needs to be careful not to do anything in the ordinance that goes against what the legislature has allowed. He said by amending how assessors are currently paid by the level of education and certification they obtain may open Small Claims Judges and Township Trustees to the same claim. Mr. Haith said when a company gets into certification and education as the basis of compensation, there is a possibility for unfair classification that could cause the county money and a lawsuit. Mr. Haith added that there is a statutory provision with assessors that could provide a decrease in pay if certifications are not met by individual assessors. Ms. Williams clarified that she only provided the panel with classification specification of the assessor to give the panel an idea on what the assessors do. She said she was not implying that all assessors need to fit the specification. She said currently, according to

statute, if an assessor does not obtain a Level I by a certain time in their term they could be subject to lose part of their salary. There is also pay for having the Level II certification; assessors receive \$1,000 and employees receive \$500.

Michael Rodman, County Treasurer, clarified a statement that was written in the June 26, 2006, Salary Panel minutes, with regard to raising employee salaries rather than elected officials' salaries. He said he was not speaking on behalf of other elected officials, but only to his own salary. He also clarified that he does not personally obtain a car, which is noted with his salary. The Treasurer's Office has a car available for several staff members that use it to look at properties.

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the County Salary Recommendation Panel of the City-County Council was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lettie Oliver, Chair
County Salary Recommendation Panel

LO/as